



File Code: 1950

Date: March 17, 2014

Dear Interested Party,

Libby Ranger District has completed the East Reservoir Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Draft Record of Decision (DROD). Copies of these documents are available from the Libby Ranger District, 12557 Hwy 37, Libby, MT 59923. The telephone number is (406) 293-7773. You may view these documents on the Kootenai National Forest project website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/kootenai/projects/projects/index.shtml>.

The East Reservoir Project is a non-HFRA (Healthy Forest Restoration Act) project. It considers land management activities, including timber harvest, fuel management, access management, road storage, road decommissioning, trail access changes and precommercial thinning within the Cripple Planning Subunit. The major watersheds in the project area are Fivemile Creek, Warland Creek, Cripple Horse Creek, Canyon Creek and Dunn Creek. Two action alternatives and a no-action alternative are analyzed in detail. Alternative 2 with Modifications is the preferred alternative.

Under current Forest Service regulations 36 CFR 218 (March 27, 2013), eligible parties may seek administrative review of unresolved concerns before a project decision has been made. When scoping was conducted for the East Reservoir Project in 2013, a post-decision appeals process, as outlined in 36 CFR 215, was applicable. Because the ROD for the East Reservoir Project comes more than 6 months after the effective date of the new regulations (36 CFR 218.16(b)(2)), the new objection process, as outlined in 36 CFR 218 Subparts A and B, is now applicable. All interested and affected parties who provided specific written comments, as defined in 36 CFR 218.2 during scoping or the comment period, are eligible to participate in the objection process.

Before the ROD can be signed, legal notice of the "Opportunity to Object" will be published in the paper of record (36 CFR 218.24). Eligible commenters (36 CFR 218.25(a)(3)) have 45 days from the date of publication to submit written objections to the reviewing officer (36 CFR 218.25). Issues raised in the objection must be based on previous comments unless they are based on new information that arose after the opportunity to comment (36 CFR 218.8 (c)).

The reviewing officer, as defined by CFR 218.3, will respond in writing to all objections within 45 days following the end of the objection filing period. This review time period can be extended for 30 days by the reviewing officer, if needed (36 CFR 218.26(b)). The written response must provide the reasons for the response, but need not be point-by-point and may contain instructions to the responsible official. In cases involving more than one objection to a proposed project or activity, the reviewing officer may consolidate objections and issue one or more responses (36 CFR 218.11(b)(1)).

Prior to issuing a written response, the reviewing officer or the objector(s) can request a meeting to discuss the points of objection and any possible resolutions. It is up to the reviewing officer to determine the meeting details (e.g., date, agenda, and meeting format), and whether there is enough remaining time before the end of the response period for a meeting. If a meeting is held, the responsible official will be in attendance, and although the meeting will be open to the public, it is not required to be noticed (36 CFR 218.11(a)). No further review from any other Forest Service or USDA official of the reviewing officer's written response to an objection is available (36 CFR 218.11(b)(2)).

It is the responsibility of all individuals and organizations to ensure that their objections are received in a



timely manner as provided for in 36 CFR 218.9. Comment submitted by individuals or organizations must meet the following requirements outlined in 36 CFR 218.8(d): At a minimum, an objection must include the following:

- (1) Objector's name and address as defined in §218.2, with a telephone number, if available;
- (2) Signature or other verification of authorship upon request (a scanned signature for electronic mail may be filed with the objection);
- (3) When multiple names are listed on an objection, identification of the lead objector as defined in §218.2. Verification of the identity of the lead objector must be provided upon request or the reviewing officer will designate a lead objector as provided in §218.5(d);
- (4) The name of the proposed project, the name and title of the responsible official, and the name(s) of the national forest(s) and/or ranger district(s) on which the proposed project will be implemented;
- (5) A description of those aspects of the proposed project addressed by the objection, including specific issues related to the proposed project; if applicable, how the objector believes the environmental analysis or draft decision specifically violates law, regulation, or policy; suggested remedies that would resolve the objection; supporting reasons for the reviewing officer to consider; and
- (6) A statement that demonstrates the connection between prior specific written comments on the particular proposed project or activity and the content of the objection, unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the designated opportunity(ies) for comment (see paragraph (c) of this section).

Please submit your project-specific objections to:

USDA Forest Service Northern Region
ATTN: Reviewing Officer, Faye Krueger
P. O. Box 7669
Missoula, Montana 59807-7669

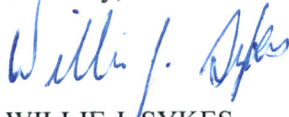
They can be mailed or hand-delivered between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., or faxed to (406) 329-3347. Electronic comments may also be sent to appeals-northern-regional-office@fs.fed.us.

Electronic comments must be submitted in rich text format (RTF), Word (.doc) or Word Perfect format. The subject line must contain the name of the project for which you are submitting comments. You should normally receive an automated acknowledgement from us as confirmation of receipt. If you do not receive an automated acknowledgment of the receipt of documents, it is your responsibility to ensure timely receipt by other means.

All comments become part of the public record associated with this project, and are available for public review, along with the names, addresses, email addresses and phone numbers of the commenter(s). Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments will not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR 218.

If you need additional information or would like to request a printed hard copy or electronic copy on CD of the document, please contact Denise Beck, Interdisciplinary Team Leader, at (406) 293-7773. Thank you for taking time to be involved with the East Reservoir Project.

Sincerely,



WILLIE J. SYKES
Acting Libby District Ranger
Kootenai National Forest